



Great Basin

FIRE PREVENTION EDUCATION WORKING COMMITTEE

Great Basin Fire Prevention Education Working Committee March 18-19, 2003 Idaho Falls, ID

Those members present: Rich Rusk, Jeannette Hartog, Larry Benham, Ronna Hubbard, Susan Marzec, Dave Eakers, and Ruta Glinski.

Since Rich has been mobilized with his Type I overhead team for the last two months, the agenda was not developed ahead of time as it usually is. Members brought items for discussion.

Ruta is the newest member to the Working Team representing Nevada Bureau of Land Management, residing in the State Office in Reno. She introduced herself as just coming back West from the Coordination Center in Minnesota....and happy to be here. The group introduced themselves and then gave Ruta a history of the Working Team.

National Fire Plan Grant Assistance Programs

FEMA Fire Fund - \$750 million has just been approved and all Federal agencies are assisting getting these funds to communities at risk from wildfire.

Rural Fire Assistance Fund – These are BLM funds identified for rural fire departments to upgrade their fire training and equipment. Each State administers these funds in a different manner. Some States allow Federal agencies to send dollars directly to the rural fire departments, and some States have policies which have the funds go through the State agency to rural fire departments.

Community Fire Assistance Fund – These BLM funds are identified to aid communities at risk in hazard fuels mitigation projects or WUI (wildland urban interface) projects. Again, these funds are administered a little different – through the State, through Firesafe Councils, etc. depending on State policies.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Fund – These Forest Service funds are identified to aid volunteer fire departments and in all States are administered through the State organization. This fund is not new, just more dollars are available with the National Fire Plan.

NFPORS (National Fire Planning Operations Reporting System) - This is the computer system in which all projects are entered to be approved for funding through the National Fire Plan dollars.

Fire Restrictions

Idaho – Interagency partners met in February to review their existing fire restriction and closure plan and suggest necessary changes for 2003. The group agreed to add Fire Restriction Zone #10 which will be the entire Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness which lies in both Forest Service Region 1 and 4. Both Regions have agreed on this new zone and a draft has been written. Currently, it is being reviewed by all the partners involved and will be ready for finalization soon. A new map has been drafted identifying FR Zone #10. South Idaho Zone Coordinator will continue to be Kelly Woods, Boise NF, for 2003. She will be get the Plan signed and out to all interagency partners as soon as signed.

Utah – After the 2002 fire season, it was decided that a more simple, easy to understand fire restriction and closure plan was needed for the State of Utah. Interagency partners agreed to eliminate Stages and go with either “in” or “out” of restrictions with the option of a complete “fire ban” if necessary. Other particulars will be handled through “exemptions” handled through the agency at the local level. Fire Restriction Zones were identified which will coincide with the five geographically identified dispatch centers already established in the state. The Annual Operating Plan produced by the State of Utah as an addendum to the Master Agreement for the State of Utah will give details in determining the need for fire restrictions. A letter from respective agencies will be going out with the restriction plan and map shortly.

Smokey’s 60th Birthday - An interagency committee has been established and met with the Ad Council and the National Association of State Foresters to begin planning for Smokey’s 60th. It was decided that Smokey would return to traditional stature and a theme to reflect his strength and ongoing message will be developed by the Ad Council. Theme materials and messages will be developed for the field to design and celebrate the 60th locally. No large, National celebration is planned. The committee will continue to pass information to the field as it is developed.

Ad Council Public Service Advertising - A new campaign has been designed and should be seen on national TV beginning in April. In recent years, other topics such as “Crime Scene” were featured; the new campaign will again use Smokey, but in a subtle way. It has been reported to be very clever and catchy focusing on campfires being the largest factor in unwanted human-caused wildfires.

Fire Posters and Signs - A task force was developed at the National level to design an interagency fire poster and sign program. It was suggested that the posters and signs be printed “without” the Forest Service shield with the option for all agencies to affix their own logos. At the same time, the task force learned that the FS is rewriting their Engineering Handbook which is an excellent opportunity for the proposal to be instigated. A review of current fire posters and signs is underway with the idea of editing messages and updating artwork. Please contact Jeannette if you have suggestions for the handbook.

Fire Prevention Planning Levels - Another attempt was made to get the Great Basin Fire Prevention Planning Levels put in the GB Mob Guide. Again, the Great Basin Coordinating Group wanted to limit the size of the Guide, and our request was denied. All members of the Working Committee are asked to circulate the levels and use as a guiding document for their program.

Readiness Review Checklist – A checklist (attached) was distributed and suggested it or a similar version be used by all units as a guide to “ready” them for the upcoming season.

Local Fuels Committees – Interagency fuels committees are being developed at many local levels in conjunction with hazardous fuels mitigation and the National Fire Plan. It was suggested that prevention/mitigation specialists become involved with these committees to assist in the education/information/and awareness necessary for communities to accept the fuels treatment.

Communications Committee – An interagency committee for communications has recently been developed and will be hosted at Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center. Susan Marzec is heading up this committee which will organize ways to work with the media for more efficient and accurate reporting of fire activity....and hopefully proactive prevention messages during high fire activity.

National Fire Prevention Education Teams – The only session for training team members in 2003 will be held April 21-25 in Hood River, OR. The session has 63 folks registered. There is a Request for Proposal on the street for a National Prevention Team Coordinator which will be a contract position. Please see www.nifc.gov for details on applying. The proposal closes March 24. A two-person Prevention Team was requested for the Island of Guam to assist in mitigating an arson problem. Sue McCourt (Plumas NF) was the team leader and Teresa Rigby (Salt Lake Field Office BLM) was her assistant on this 10-day assignment.

Firewise Poster – The National FIREWISE Committee has recently developed a new poster for science teachers. It is full color with facts, statistics, and lesson suggestions for teachers. It is available from John Owens, BLM NIFC.

Training – An interagency National task force has been implemented to study current training and what is needed for prevention/mitigation specialists to do their job at various levels. Mike Dannenberg is heading up this committee. More information is forthcoming on this topic as the committee works through this assignment.

The Utah Wildfire Academy will be held in Tooele, UT, May 12-16. Vi Hillman, Training Specialist for the GB and Utah State BLM, has information on classes that are still available. A 2-week National Prevention Academy is being held in Sacramento, CA, beginning March 24.

Utah's 2003 Fire Prevention Plan – During the Utah State BLM Pre-Season meeting, a breakout session was tasked with developing a working prevention plan for the upcoming season. They were asked to consider tasks to be accomplished prior to and during the fire season, working with the media, and fire restrictions. The new plan will be used by interagency partners as a working tool. A copy is attached.

Great Basin/Northern Rockies Fire Prevention Education Workshop – Faye Christiansen attended to report on the progress of the workshop which will be held in Idaho Falls, ID, April 29 – May 1. It appears that everything is coming along and on schedule. There are a few speakers yet to be confirmed, and the Workshop Cadre is working to secure them.

Thirty-nine registrations have been received to date. The deadline for reservations at the Shilo is April 14. Send registration form and fee to Sandy Groth, Idaho Panhandle NF, 11569 Airport Drive, Hayden, ID 83835. All Committee members were encouraged to get the word out to their folks “again” just as a reminder so that everyone has an opportunity to participate.

The Committee toured the facility and all agreed it was a good one with plenty of amenities to support the Workshop.

GB Three-Year Strategic Plan - The Committee reviewed the Draft plan and agreed to accept as written. Ronna Hubbard will be updating the plan to reflect 2004-2006. It will be shared with the Great Basin Coordinating Group. Copy coming under separate cover.

GB Workshop Guidelines – The Committee reviewed the guidelines, attached, which were established several years ago. It was agreed to continue to use them as written.

Reports from Committee Members – All committee members shared information and activities concerning their area of responsibility.

GBFPEWC Fall Meeting – The Fall Meeting will be held in Salt Lake City, UT at Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center (EGBCC), **October 28-29**. Susan Marzec will confirm room and provide directions to GGBCC.